

MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

STATE PLAN

**LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM**

Public Law 97-35, As Amended

FY' 2008-2009



**Dale McCormick
DIRECTOR**

GRANTEE Maine State Housing Authority

Assurances

The State of Maine agrees to:

- (1) Use the funds available under this title to:
 - (A) Conduct outreach activities and provide assistance to low income households in meeting their home energy costs, particularly those with the lowest incomes that pay a high proportion of household income for home energy, consistent with paragraph (5);
 - (B) Intervene in energy crisis situations;
 - (C) Provide low-cost residential weatherization and other cost-effective energy-related home repair; and
 - (D) Plan, develop, and administer the State's program under this title including leveraging programs, and the State agrees not to use such funds for any purposes other than those specified in this title;
- (2) Make payments under this title only with respect to:
 - (A) Households in which one or more individuals are receiving --
 - (i) assistance under the State Program funded under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act;
 - (ii) supplemental security income payments under Title XVI of the Social Security Act;
 - (iii) food stamps under the Food Stamp Act of 1977; or
 - (iv) payments under Section 415, 521, 541, or 542 of Title 38, United States Code, or under Section 306 of the Veterans' and Survivors' Pension Improvement Act of 1978; or
 - (B) Households with incomes which do not exceed the greater of:
 - (i) an amount equal to 150% of the poverty level for such State; or
 - (ii) an amount equal to 60% of the State median income;

except that a State may not exclude a household from eligibility in a fiscal year solely on the basis of household income if such income is less than 110% of the poverty level for such

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State, but the State may give priority to those households with the highest home energy costs or needs in relation to household income.

- (3) Conduct outreach activities designed to assure that eligible households, especially households with elderly individuals or disabled individuals, or both, and households with high home energy burdens, are made aware of the assistance available under this title, and any similar energy-related assistance available under subtitle B of title VI (relating to community services block grant program) or under any other provision of law which carries out programs which were administered under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 before the date of the enactment of this Act;
- (4) Coordinate its activities under this title with similar and related programs administered by the Federal Government and such State, particularly low-income energy-related programs under Subtitle B of Title VI (relating to community services block grant program), under the supplemental security income program, under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act, under Title XX of the Social Security Act, under the low-income weatherization assistance program under Title IV of the Energy Conservation and Production Act, or under any other provision of law which carries out programs which were administered under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 before the date of the enactment of this Act;
- (5) Provide, in a timely manner, that the highest level of assistance will be furnished to those households which have the lowest incomes and the highest energy costs or needs in relation to income, taking into account family size, except that the State may not differentiate in implementing this section between the households described in clauses 2(A) and 2(B) of this Subsection;
- (6) To the extent it is necessary to designate local administrative agencies in order to carry out the purposes of this title, to give special consideration, in the designation of such agencies, to any local public or private nonprofit agency which was receiving Federal funds under any low-income energy assistance program or weatherization program under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 or any other provision of law on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, except that--
 - (A) The State shall, before giving such special consideration, determine that the agency involved meets program and fiscal requirements established by the State; and
 - (B) If there is no such agency because of any change in the assistance furnished to programs for economically disadvantaged persons, then the State shall give special consideration in the designation of local administrative agencies to any successor agency which is operated in substantially the same manner as the predecessor agency which did receive funds for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made;
- (7) If the State chooses to pay home energy suppliers directly, establish procedures to:

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- (A) Notify each participating household of the amount of assistance paid on its behalf;
 - (B) Assure that the home energy supplier will charge the eligible household, in the normal billing process, the difference between the actual cost of the home energy and the amount of the payment made by the State under this Title;
 - (C) Assure that the home energy supplier will provide assurances that any agreement entered into with a home energy supplier under this paragraph will contain provisions to assure that no household receiving assistance under this Title will be treated adversely because of such assistance under applicable provisions of State law or public regulatory requirements; and
 - (D) Ensure that the provision of vendor payments remains at the option of the State in consultation with local grantees and may be contingent on unregulated vendors taking appropriate measures to alleviate the energy burdens of eligible households, including providing for agreements between suppliers and individuals eligible for benefits under this Act that seek to reduce home energy costs, minimize the risks of home energy crisis, and encourage regular payments by individuals receiving financial assistance for home energy costs;
- (8) Provide assurances that:
- (A) The State will not exclude households described in clause (2)(B) of this subsection from receiving home energy assistance benefits under clause (2), and;
 - (B) The State will treat owners and renters equitably under the program assisted under this title;
- (9) Provide that:
- (A) The State may use for planning and administering the use of funds under this Title an amount not to exceed 10% of the funds payable to such State under this Title for a fiscal year and not transferred pursuant to Section 2604(f) for use under another block grant; and
 - (B) The State will pay from non-Federal sources the remaining costs of planning and administering the program assisted under this Title and will not use Federal funds for such remaining costs (except for the costs of the activities described in paragraph (16);
- (10) Provide that such fiscal control and fund accounting procedures will be established as may be necessary to assure the proper disbursement of and accounting for Federal funds paid to the State under this Title, including procedures for monitoring the assistance provided under this Title, and provide that the State will comply with the provisions of chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code (commonly known as the "Single Audit Act");

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- (11) Permit and cooperate with Federal investigations undertaken in accordance with Section 2608;
 - (12) Provide for timely and meaningful public participation in the development of the plan described in Subsection (c);
 - (13) Provide an opportunity for a fair administrative hearing to individuals whose claims for assistance under the plan described in Subsection c) are denied or are not acted upon with reasonable promptness; and
 - (14) Cooperate with the Secretary with respect to data collecting and reporting under Section 2610.
 - (15)* Beginning in fiscal year 1992, provide, in addition to such services as may be offered by State Departments of Public Welfare at the local level, outreach and intake functions for crisis situations and heating and cooling assistance that is administered by additional State and local governmental entities or community-based organizations (such as community action agencies, area agencies on aging and not-for-profit neighborhood-based organizations), and in States where such organizations do not administer functions as of September 30, 1991, preference in awarding grants or contracts for intake services shall be provided to those agencies that administer the low-income weatherization or energy crisis intervention programs.
- * This assurance is applicable only to States, and to territories whose annual regular LIHEAP allotments exceed \$200,000. Territories with annual allotments of \$200,000 or less and Indian tribes/tribal organizations are not subject to Assurance 15.**
- (16) Use up to 5% of such funds, at its option, to provide services that encourage and enable households to reduce their home energy needs and thereby the need for energy assistance, including needs assessments, counseling, and assistance with energy vendors, and report to the Secretary concerning the impact of such activities on the number of households served, the level of direct benefits provided to those households, and the number of households that remain unserved.

Certification to the Assurances: As Chief Executive Officer, I agree to comply with the sixteen assurances contained in Title XXVI of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, as amended.* By signing these assurances, I also agree to abide by the standard assurances on lobbying, debarment and suspension, and a drug-free workplace.

Signature of the Tribal or Board Chairperson or Chief Executive Officer of the State or Territory.**

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Signature: _____
Dale McCormick

Title: Director, Maine State Housing Authority

Date: _____

EIN: *** 010312916

* Indian tribes/tribal organizations, and territories with annual regular LIHEAP allotments of \$200,000 or less, are not subject to assurance 15, and thus must only certify to 15 assurances.

** If a person other than the Chief Executive Officer of the State or territory or Tribal Chairperson or Board Chairperson of a tribal organization, is signing the certification to the assurances, a letter must be submitted delegating such authority. (PLEASE ATTACH DELEGATION AUTHORITY.) The delegation must include authority to sign the assurances, not just to administer the program.

*** HHS needs the EIN (Entity Identification Number) of the State, territory or Tribal agency that is to receive the grant funds before it can issue the grant.

In the above assurances which are quoted from the law, "State", means the 50 States, the District of Columbia, an Indian Tribe or Tribal Organization, or a Territory; "title" of the Act refers to Title XXVI of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, (OBRA), as amended, the "Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act"; "section" means Section 2605 of OBRA; and, "subsection" refers to Section 2605(b) of OBRA.

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statutory
reference

2605(a)

2605(b)(1)

Please check which components you will operate under the LIHEAP program: (Note: You must provide information for each component designated here as requested elsewhere in this plan.

			<u>Date of Operation</u>
(use of funds)	<u> X </u>	heating assistance	October 1, 2008 – April 30, 2009 (unless otherwise extended by MSHA)
	* <u> X </u>	cooling assistance	June 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009
	<u> X </u>	crisis assistance	October 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009
	<u> X </u>	weatherization assistance	October 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009

* Cooling is administered when emergency funds are provided for Cooling.

2605(c)(1)(C)

Please estimate what amount of available LIHEAP funds will be used for each component that you will operate: **The total of all percentages must add up to 100%.**

(use of funds)	<u> 72 </u> %	heating assistance
	<u> </u> %	cooling assistance
2605(k)(1)	<u> 1 </u> %	crisis assistance - A
	<u> 0 </u> %	crisis assistance - B
2605(b)(9)	<u> 15 </u> %	weatherization assistance
	<u> </u> %	carryover to the following fiscal year
2605(b)(16)	<u> 10 </u> %	administrative and planning costs
	<u> 2 </u> %	services to reduce home energy needs (see Other Benefits below) including needs assessment (assurance 16)
	<u> 0 </u> %	used to develop and implement leveraging activities (limited to the greater of .08% or \$35,000 for States, the greater of 2% or \$100 for territories, tribes and tribal organizations).
	<u> 100 </u> %	TOTAL

In the event that Maine's regular (or baseline) LIHEAP funding amount for the 2008-2009 Program Year is equal to or greater than the regular (or baseline) funding amount for the 2004-2005 Program Year, the amount of the total administration fees paid to Subgrantees in connection with the administration of LIHEAP for the 2008-2009 Program Year will remain the same as the total amount of administration fees paid to Subgrantees for administration of LIHEAP for the 2004-2005 Program Year (exclusive of

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reference

administration fees paid to Subgrantees in connection with the payment and administration of supplemental benefits for the 2004-2005 Program Year). Subgrantees will not be paid any administration fees in connection with the administration of supplemental benefits for the 2008-2009 Program Year, unless Grantee requires that the Subgrantees assume additional duties in connection therewith. In the event that Maine's regular (or baseline) LIHEAP funding amount for the 2008-2009 Program Year is less than the regular (or baseline) funding amount allocated for the 2004-2005 Program Year Subgrantees will be paid total administration fees in accordance with the method utilized by the Grantee for the 2004-2005 Program Year, except that Subgrantees will not be paid any administrative fees in connection with the administration of supplemental benefits unless Grantee requires that the Subgrantees assume additional duties in connection therewith.

OTHER BENEFITS - Subgrantees will provide Outreach Services to designated sites and home visits for households that are elderly, disabled or unable to travel to the Subgrantees main office. Other benefits will be used to pay for the Subgrantee's costs associated with the taking of LIHEAP applications at the Outreach sites only, as well as providing additional services to the applicants, such as budget counseling, energy education, payment arrangement assistance, home visits, and intake. Other benefits (assurance 16) will not exceed 4% percent of the grant, with no more than 2% of the LIHEAP funds allocated to fund outreach activities by the Subgrantees as described above.

MSHA may also use up to 2% of the LIHEAP funds to pay accrued interest, at an estimated rate of 3%, on any MSHA funds advanced to participating qualified oil and/or kerosene (K-1) vendors choosing the Cap Price Plan pricing option or the Discounted Cash Price pricing option set forth in the attached Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene) in order to assist them in securing lower-cost fuel supplies to fulfill their respective obligations to deliver home energy to eligible households. All funds advanced by MSHA will subsequently be credited to the accounts of eligible households by the participating oil and/or K-1 vendors. Further, all MSHA funds advanced by MSHA will only be advanced subject to, and in accordance with, the terms and conditions of the attached Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene) to be executed by MSHA and each participating oil and/or K-1 vendor. Other benefits are not considered administrative costs, and therefore are not subject to the ten percent administrative limit.

Certification of the LIHEAP application and processing of a benefit will be charged to administrative costs. All processing of LIHEAP applications are subject to the ten percent administrative limit.

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reference

If Emergency funds are released by HHS for cooling, benefits will be issued to households determined eligible in the current program year. Benefits will be based on the number of households and amount of funds available.

2605(c)(1)(C) The funds reserved for winter crisis assistance which have not been expended by March 31 will be reprogrammed to:

(assistance funds) X heating assistance
 cooling assistance
 weatherization assistance
 X other (specify): ECIP - Component B

Applications for energy crisis assistance are geographically accessible to all households in the area to be served.

**2605(b)(2) What are your maximum eligibility limits? (Please check the
 2605(c)(1)(A) components to which they apply) Current year guidelines must be used.**

(eligibility) X 150% of the poverty guidelines:
 heating X cooling crisis X wx X
 125% of the poverty guidelines:
 heating cooling crisis wx
 110% of the poverty guidelines:
 heating cooling crisis wx
 * X 55% of the State's median income:
 heating X cooling crisis X wx X
 Other (specify for each component)
 Households automatically eligible if one person is receiving
 TANF, SSI, Food stamps, Certain
 means-tested veterans programs (Heating Cooling
 Crisis Wx)

* Households with incomes up to 55% of HUD's State Median Income, which is equivalent to 170% of the HHS federal poverty guidelines, are eligible if a household member is deemed susceptible to hypothermia (elderly over age

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reference

60, children under age 2, or having a medical condition that renders them vulnerable to hypothermia as documented by a doctor's note) .

MSHA will determine eligibility based on the availability of federal funding for the Programs during each Program Year. If MSHA receives a base funding award for the Program during a Program Year in an amount sufficient to provide an average HEAP benefit equal to \$300 to all Households that are eligible for benefits pursuant to Section 2.B. of the MSHA Home Energy Assistance Program Rule, Chapter 24, as amended, as determined by MSHA, then the Subgrantee shall use the criteria set forth in Section 2.B. of the Rule to determine the eligibility of Applicants. However, if MSHA does not receive a base award in an amount sufficient to provide such benefits to all Households eligible for benefits under Section 2.B., then the eligibility criteria set forth in Section 2.C. of the Rule shall apply.

2605(c)(1)(A)
2605(b)(2)
(eligibility)

**Do you have additional eligibility requirements for
Heating Assistance: X Yes No**

Do you use:	<u> Yes </u>	<u> No </u>
Assets Test?	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Priority eligible groups: (List, if any)	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Households with direct heating costs.	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Elderly?	<u> X* </u>	<u> </u>
Disabled?	<u> X* </u>	<u> </u>
Young Children?	<u> X* </u>	<u> </u>
Other: (If yes, please describe)	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>

A one month priority application period is provided for households who have a direct heating cost, who are hypothermia susceptible.

* Priority is given to those groups that have a direct heating cost.

Subsidized housing tenants with heat included in their rent are eligible for a HEAP benefit in an amount not to exceed \$5.00, which is the total amount

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reference

of HEAP benefit payable to such persons for all future heating seasons until September 30, 2011.

Subgrantees may begin taking applications as early as July 1st of each year but shall commence taking applications no later than either July 14th of each year or the date of receipt of funds from the federal/State agency, whichever comes first.

Subgrantees will provide in their workplans and budgets, their process for administering the program including intake and outreach services, certification, and benefit determination process. The Subgrantee, People's Regional Opportunity Program (PROP), will pilot a mail-out application process this year to all households that were served last year. Mail out applications will not be used on new applicants, previously denied applicants that apply this year, or applicants whose location/address has changed. MaineHousing will do all the previously served applicants whose only income is Social Security.

2605(c)(1)(A)
2605(b)(2)
(eligibility)

Do you have additional eligibility requirements for:

Cooling Assistance: Yes X No

AS DESCRIBED ON PAGE 7, SECTION 2605 (c)(1)(A)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Do you use:		
Assets test?	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Priority eligible groups? (List, if any)	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Elderly?	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Disabled?	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Young children?	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Other: (If yes, please describe)	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>

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statutory
reference

2604(c)

The grantee has set the following additional eligibility requirements
for Crisis Assistance:

2605(c)(1)(A)

(eligibility)

Do you use:

Yes No

Assets test?

_____ X _____

Must the household have received a shut-
off notice or have an empty tank?
(tank may be 1/4 full)

X _____

Must the household have exhausted
regular benefit?

X _____

Must the household have received a rent
eviction notice?

_____ X _____

Must heating/cooling be medically
necessary?

_____ X _____

Other:

What constitutes a crisis? (Please describe)

Households must be in an emergency energy crisis situation for Component A and homeowners must have an energy crisis for Component B, such as weather-related supply shortage emergencies and other household energy-related emergencies which does or will pose a threat to the health and safety of a member of the household.

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statutory
reference

2605(c)(1)(A)
(eligibility)

The grantee has set the following additional eligibility requirements for Weatherization:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Do you use:		
Assets test?	_____	<u>X</u>
Priority groups? (Please list)	<u>X</u>	_____

As described below under DOE.

Are you using Department of Energy (DOE), Low Income Weatherization Assistance Program (LIWAP) rules?

X _____

Are there exceptions to DOE rules?

If yes, please list below.

_____ X

In addition, the subgrantee establishes priorities in the following order in selecting income-eligible households for Weatherization services:

1. Households which are eligible for fuel assistance benefits and which include a household member who is:
 - a. Elderly;
 - b. Handicapped; or
 - c. Under 24 months of age.
2. Households which consume the highest amounts of energy per square foot of living space, thereby indicating the highest potential energy inefficiency.
3. Households where there are opportunities to leverage funds for providing weatherization services.
4. All other households which are eligible for fuel assistance benefits.

Subgrantees will address these priorities while serving their eligible population; by attempting to correlate services with the percentages of elderly, handicapped, children under 24 months of age and renters with heat included represented by their service area population.

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reference

2605(b)(3)
2604(c)(3)(A)

(outreach)

The grantee conducts the following outreach activities designed to assure that eligible households are made aware of all LIHEAP assistance available:

- X provide intake service through home visits or by telephone for the physically infirm (i.e. elderly or disabled).
- X place posters/flyers in local and county social service offices, offices of aging, social security offices, VA, etc.
- X publish articles in local newspapers or broadcast media announcements.
- X include inserts in energy vendor billings to inform individuals of the availability of all types of LIHEAP assistance.
- X make mass mailing to past recipients of LIHEAP.
- X inform low income applicants of the availability of all types of LIHEAP assistance at application intake for other low-income programs.
- X utilize early application period at the beginning of the program for the elderly and disabled with a direct energy cost.
- X accept applications for energy crisis at sites that are geographically accessible to all households in the area to be served.
- X execute interagency agreements with other low-income program offices to perform outreach to target groups.
- X other (Please specify):

Each subgrantee develops and provides additional services and benefits for LIHEAP clients from various private agencies. Many of these agencies are unique to a particular area and benefits range from transportation to an appointment for intake to actual blankets or fuel. These referrals and other service's are examples of those referred to as Other Benefits on Page 7.

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(4)

Please describe how the grantee will assure that LIHEAP is coordinated with similar and related programs. The description provided applies to all components unless specifically noted.

(coordination)

The subgrantees coordinate LIHEAP with the following programs: Social Security, TANF, Low-Income Weatherization, Maine Job Training System, State and local energy programs, Low Income Assistance Plan (LIAP), local municipalities, utility companies, and other public and/or private association, as outlined in the Leveraging Activities (2607A). Included but not limited to Home Repair Programs, Temporary Homeless Assistance Program, Homeless Shelters, the Alpha I Home Improvement Program, and the PUC Appliance Replacement Program and all REACH projects.

Maine's program strength is its ability to provide these strong linkages.

2605(b)(5)

2605(b)(2)

2605(b)(8)(A)

Describe how the grantee will assure that income eligible households will not be treated differently than categorically eligible households when determining eligibility and benefit amounts. This applies to all components unless specifically noted below.

(benefit levels)

Both non-categorically eligible and categorically eligible households will be treated the same when determining benefit amounts. The benefit amounts of an eligible household are determined by actual consumption for the heating season of the prior Program Year, or by the Design Heat Load Calculation formula as set forth below under Section 2605(c)(1)(B).

GRANTEE Maine State Housing Authoritystatutory
reference2605(b)(5)
(determination
of benefits)**Heating Component**

Please check the variables you use to determine your benefits levels:

- ☒ income
- ☒ family (household) size
- ☒ home energy cost
- ☒ fuel type
- ☒ climate/region
- ☒ individual bill
- ☒ dwelling type
- ☒ energy burden (% of income spent on home energy)
- ☒ energy need
- ☐ other (describe)

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(5)

go

2605(c)(1)(B)

(benefit levels)

Please describe how the grantee will assure that the highest benefits

to households with the lowest incomes and the highest energy costs or needs in relation to income, taking into account family size. Please describe benefit levels or attach a copy of your payment matrix.

Maine uses a tiered benefit calculation that assures the highest benefits go to households with the highest heating energy costs and the lowest income. The calculation takes into account estimated or actual household heating energy costs, household income, family size, and susceptibility to hypothermia as set forth in Chapter 24 of MSHA's Rules.

Subgrantees are directed to utilize the eligible household's actual fuel consumption data collected directly from energy vendors, or the Design Heat Load Calculation formula to estimate each eligible household's annual heating costs in accordance with the MSHA Home Energy Assistance Program Rule, Chapter 24, as amended which Rule is hereby incorporated herein by reference and the 2005/2006 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Program and Fiscal Handbook, as amended.

The grantee provides in-kind (e.g., blankets, space heaters) and/or other forms of benefits as follows:

 X Yes No If yes, please describe.

- a. Free local intake sites
- b. Extensive use of volunteers
- c. Coordination with utility benefits
- d. Private contributions in conjunction with LIHEAP

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reference

2605(b)(5)
2605(c)(1)(B)

Cooling Component

Please check the variables you use to determine your benefit levels:

If Emergency funds are issued to Maine for cooling, benefits will be determined based on Emergency funds available and previously determined eligible fuel assistance households.

(benefit
determination)

<input type="checkbox"/>	income
<input type="checkbox"/>	family (household) size
<input type="checkbox"/>	home energy cost
<input type="checkbox"/>	fuel type
<input type="checkbox"/>	climate/region
<input type="checkbox"/>	individual bill
<input type="checkbox"/>	dwelling type
<input type="checkbox"/>	energy burden (% of income spent on home energy)
<input type="checkbox"/>	energy need
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	other (describe)

Benefits will be issued to households determined eligible in the previous heating season depending on the availability of benefits. Benefits will be based on the number of households and amount of funds available.

2605(b)(5)

Please describe how the grantee will assure that the highest benefits go

2605(c)(1)(B)

to households with the lowest incomes and the highest energy costs or needs in relation to income, taking into account family size. Please describe benefit levels or attach a copy of your payment matrix.

As Described on Page 16, Section 2605 (c)(1)(B)

(benefit
levels)

Do you provide in-kind (e.g., fans) and/or other forms of benefits?

☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, please describe.

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reference2605(b)(5)
2605(c)(1)(B)**Crisis (ECIP) Component A****Do you have a separate crisis component?**Yes X No (benefit
determination)**How do you determine crisis assistance benefits?**

Beginning November 1st through March 31st, up to \$200 for emergency home heating fuel deliveries, utility emergencies, or emergency heating system repairs.

 \$ 200 amount to resolve crisis, up to maximum other (describe)**Do you provide crisis assistance through fast track handling under your LIHEAP heating/cooling program?** X Yes No**If no, how do you handle crisis situations?**

(benefit levels)

Please indicate maximum benefit for each type of crisis assistance offered. X Heating \$200 maximum benefit Cooling maximum benefit X Year-round \$200 maximum benefit**Do you provide in-kind (e.g., blankets, space heaters, fans) and/or other forms of benefits?** Yes X No If yes, please describe.

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(5)
2605(c)(1)(B)

(benefit
determination)

Crisis (ECIP) Component B - Home Owners**How do you determine crisis assistance benefits?**

Beginning October 1 through September 30, grantee may choose to authorize up to \$2500 per household for emergency health and safety issues, for home heating system repair or replacement that poses a threat to the household, and/or a Clean, Tune and Evaluation of the Heating System. Determination to be made on a case by case basis. Applications must be taken during the current program year to be eligible for assistance under ECIP B.

\$2500 amount to resolve crisis, up to maximum

_____ other (describe)

Do you provide crisis assistance through fast track handling under your LIHEAP heating/cooling program?

 X Yes _____ No

Assessments of the health and safety issues are determined and targeted to meet the individual need of homeowners, within a 24 - 72 hour period.

(benefit levels)

Please indicate maximum benefit for each type of crisis assistance offered.

 X Heating/repairs \$2500 maximum benefit

_____ Cooling _____ maximum benefit

 X Year-round \$2500 maximum benefit

Do you provide in-kind (e.g., blankets, space heaters, fans) and/or other forms of benefits?

_____ Yes X No

If yes, please describe.

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reference

2605(b)(5)

**WEATHERIZATION & OTHER ENERGY RELATED HOME
REPAIR AND IMPROVEMENTS:**2605(c)(1)
(B)&(D)**What LIHEAP weatherization services/materials do you provide?
(Check all categories that apply.)**

<u> X </u>	Weatherization Needs assessments/audits.
<u> X </u>	Caulking, insulation, storm windows, etc.
<u> X </u>	Furnace/heating system modifications/repairs
<u> X </u>	Furnace replacement
<u> </u>	Cooling efficiency mods/repairs/replacement
<u> X </u>	Other (Please describe).

Residential Energy Assistance Challenge Option Program (REACH) to
reduce electric energy consumption in low-income households.**Do you have a maximum LIHEAP weatherization
benefit/expenditure per household?** X Yes No

Currently, the benefit averages approximately \$2,719 per unit.

If yes, what is the maximum amount? \$2,719 **Under what rules do you administer LIHEAP weatherization? (check
only one.)**

<u> </u>	Entirely under LIHEAP (not DOE) rules
<u> X </u>	Entirely under DOE LIWAP rules
<u> </u>	Mostly under LIHEAP rules with the following DOE LIWAP rule(s) where LIHEAP and LIWAP rules differ (Check all that apply):

 X Weatherize building if at least 66% of units (50% in 2
& 4-unit buildings) are eligible units or will become
eligible within 180 days, with DOE funds. (LIHEAP
funds can only be used for eligible clients in the
apartments.)

GRANTEE Maine State Housing Authoritystatutory
reference

☐ * Weatherize shelters temporarily housing primarily low income persons (excluding nursing homes, prisons, and similar institutional care facilities).

* not considered residential under LIHEAP therefore LIHEAP is not used on shelters.

☐ Other (Please describe)

☐ Mostly under DOE LIWAP rules, with the following LIHEAP rule(s) where LIHEAP and LIWAP rules differ (Check all that apply.)

☐ Weatherization not subject to DOE LIWAP maximum statewide average cost per dwelling unit.

☐ Other (Please describe.)

2605(b)(6)

The state administers LIHEAP through the following local agencies:

(agency
designation)

☐ county welfare offices

☒ community action agencies (weatherization)

☒ community action agencies (heating, cooling or crisis)

☐ charitable organizations

☐ not applicable (i.e., state energy office)

☐ other, describe

Have you changed local administering agencies from last year?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please describe how you selected them.

What components are affected by the change?

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statutory
reference

2605(c)(1)(E)

Please describe any additional steps that will be taken to target assistance to households with high home energy burdens. (This applies to all components. If all steps to target households with high home energy burdens are described elsewhere in the plan, no further information is required here.)

**(targeting of
assistance)**

1. Target weatherization to homes with high heating cost per square foot determined through the Statewide LIHEAP Database.
2. Repair/replace inefficient heating systems.

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(7)

(energy
suppliers)

Do you make payments directly to home energy suppliers?

Heating X **Yes** **No**

Cooling **Yes** **No**

Crisis X **Yes** **No**

Are there exceptions? If so, please describe.

MSHA will be responsible for the payment of benefits under LIHEAP and the Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP), including the direct payment of benefits to all participating fuel and energy vendors with Vendor Agreements with MSHA.

MSHA may issue a direct check to LIHEAP recipients who do not have a designated vendor and or utility account to service their area. MSHA will issue benefits on behalf of an eligible household to the electric utility if the recipient's benefit can not be used for their primary heating source and the eligible household is responsible for their electric utility bill. LIHEAP benefits cannot be counted to determine or to decrease an eligible applicant's **LIAP** benefit. Benefits will be determined based on the primary heating source.

Subgrantees will continue to be responsible for outreach, application intake, eligibility certification, benefit determination for energy and fuel assistance and ECIP – A. Subgrantees will also continue to generate and mail denial notices, fuel assistance vouchers, and purchase orders for wood and ECIP - A benefits to eligible households and participating vendors.

MSHA may also make certain prepayments to participating qualified oil and/or K-1 vendors choosing the Cap Price Plan pricing option or the Discounted Cash Price pricing option set forth in the attached Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene), in order to assist participating qualified oil and/or K-1 vendors in securing lower-cost fuel supplies to fulfill their respective obligations to deliver home energy to eligible households. Any funds advanced by MSHA will be subject to, and made in accordance with, the terms and conditions of the Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene) between the participating oil and/or K-1 vendor and MSHA. All funds advanced by MSHA will subsequently be credited to the accounts of eligible households by the participating oil and/or K-1 vendors.

MSHA may make an initial prepayment to vendors choosing the Cap Price Plan pricing option or the Discounted Cash Price pricing option set forth in

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statutory
reference

the attached Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene) within fifteen (15) business days of the later of (i) the date that the Authority receives the executed Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene) or (ii) the HHS Approval Date in order to assist qualified participating vendors in fulfilling their respective obligations to deliver Home Energy. The amount of each initial prepayment could be up to equal to 50% of the LIHEAP payments made to the participating qualified oil and/or K-1 vendor in the prior Program Year. Subject to MSHA's receipt of LIHEAP funds from the federal government, MSHA may also make a second prepayment on or before November 30, 2008, to participating qualified oil and/or K-1 vendors choosing the Cap Price Plan pricing option or the Discounted Cash Price pricing option with a Vendor Agreement with MSHA (Oil and Kerosene). The amount of the second prepayment will be approximately 25% of the LIHEAP payments made to each participating qualified oil and/or K-1 vendor in the prior Program Year. Remaining benefits for eligible households will be paid to participating qualified oil and/or K-1 vendors as each household is determined eligible. All payments to participating oil and/or K-1 vendors will be subject to, and made in accordance with, the terms and conditions of the Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene) to be executed by MSHA and each participating oil and/or K-1 vendor.

MSHA may make the initial payments to participating qualified oil and K-1 vendors choosing the Cap Price Plan pricing option or the Discounted Cash Price pricing option with MSHA funds (and possibly pre-committed LIHEAP funds). The MSHA funds would be repaid to MSHA with LIHEAP funds when they become available for the 2008/2009 Program Year with interest, at a rate estimated to be 3%, from the date the payments are advanced through repayment. Any interest accruing on the MSHA funds would be paid from the portion of LIHEAP funds allocated for payment of Other Benefits in accordance with Assurance 16.

All participating fuel and energy vendors must agree that the price for home energy deliveries paid for with LIHEAP benefits will not exceed the maximum delivery price as set forth in the attached form Vendor Agreements (Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene) and Vendor Agreement (Propane, Electricity, Natural Gas and Coal)) to be executed by MSHA and each participating vendor. Notwithstanding the foregoing, wood vendors must agree that the price for wood fuel deliveries paid for with LIHEAP benefits will not exceed the market price as set forth in the attached form Vendor Agreement (Wood Fuel Dealers) to be executed by MSHA and each participating wood vendor.

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(7)(A) If you make payments directly to home energy suppliers, how do you notify the client of the amount of assistance paid? (Please describe)

HEAP - The subgrantee will notify each household within ten working days of the date of certification, and will notify the household that payment has been made by sending the client a copy of the voucher. When program funds are unavailable, payment must be made within ten working days of receipt of additional funds.

2605(b)(7)(B) & (C) How do you make sure the home energy supplier performs what is required in this assurance? If vendor agreements are used, they may be attached. Indicate each component for which this description applies.

Through Vendor Agreements, annual reports provided by all contracted vendors, and on-site monitoring. Vendor Agreements (Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene), Vendor Agreement (Propane, Electricity, Natural Gas and Coal) and Vendor Agreement (Wood Fuel)) attached hereto and incorporated herein.

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(8)(B)

Is there any difference in the way owners and renters are treated? If yes, please describe.

(owners and
renters)

Heating Assistance:

___ Yes X No

Cooling Assistance:

___ Yes X No

Crisis Assistance A:

___ Yes X No

Crisis Assistance B:

___ Yes ___ No (Crisis B is for homeowners only)

Weatherization:

___ Yes X No

2605(b)(10)

(program, fiscal
monitoring, and
audit)

How do you ensure good fiscal accounting and tracking? (Please describe. Include a description of how you monitor fiscal activities.)

State rules and regulations with respect to HEAP/ECIP, HEAP WX and CHIP. An on-site annual review of each Subgrantee will be conducted by MSHA and include an examination of each Subgrantees' A133 Federal Compliance Audit. Additional on-site reviews may be required in the event MSHA identifies any compliance concerns with individual Subgrantees. Agencies without compliance concerns may be reviewed by MSHA bi-annually, in its discretion.

How do you monitor program activities? (Please be sure to include a description of how you monitor eligibility and benefit determination.)

On-site program monitoring will begin at the start of the program year and include two to three on-site visits throughout the program year. Each on-site

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statutory
reference

visit will include an entrance and exit interview. Monitoring of each agency will include reviewing the previous monitoring report, analyzing the data submitted by each Subgrantee to determine income eligibility, benefit determination and program compliance. Additional on-site monitoring will be conducted if any compliance concerns are identified by MSHA, as necessary.

Monitoring of energy suppliers will be conducted through our database, the tracking of vendor payments, annual vendor reports, and on-site monitoring.

Maine State Housing Authority will issue to the sub-grantee a written report containing all findings following each on site monitoring visit. The report will establish a reasonable time period for comment by the sub-grantee. Upon review and consideration of any comments, MSHA will so notify the sub-grantee in writing of all required corrective action and the time period for conformance.

Upon request from the sub-grantee, Maine State Housing Authority will provide technical assistance in all areas needing corrective action.

Failure to take corrective action will result in a Notice of Termination, which will state the cause and effective date of the termination.

**How is your LIHEAP program audited? Under the Single Audit Act?
If not, describe:**

 X Yes No

Audit – A Compliance and fiscal audit is conducted annually by an independent auditor and shall be conducted in accordance with the Comptroller General's Standards for Audit of Governmental Organizations, Programs, Activities and Functions and A-133.

States:

Do you conduct an annual audit of local administering agencies?

 X Yes No

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(12)

**(timely and
meaningful
public**

participation)

Please describe how the grantee will get timely and meaningful public participation in the development of the plan. (Please describe)

The Maine State Housing Authority has had several meetings with our subgrantees at their monthly Housing and Energy Council to share program concerns.

We published a notice of Public Hearing to receive public comment on the proposed State Plan on May 9- 10, 2008. Written comments will also accepted through June 2, 2008. Copies of our draft State Plan have been mailed to all interested parties requesting copies prior to the public hearing.

2605(a)(2)

(public hearings)

Did you conduct public hearings on the proposed use and distribution of your LIHEAP funds? When and where? (Not required for Tribes and tribal organizations)

The grantee held a public hearing for the proposed use and distribution of LIHEAP on May 22, 2008 at 10:30 am..

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(13)

Describe your fair hearing procedures for households whose applications are denied or not acted on in a timely manner. When are applicants informed of these rights?

(fair hearings)

FAIR HEARINGS -- HEAP, ECIP, CHIP/WEATHERIZATION

Fair hearings for LIHEAP, ECIP, CHIP and Weatherization will be conducted by the Maine State Housing Authority, in accordance with the Maine Administrative Procedures Act, Title 5, Chapter 375, upon request of any household in accordance with the Maine State Housing Authority, Home Energy Assistance Program Rule, Chapter 24, as amended.

Applicants are notified of their fair hearing rights at the time of application and through the benefit determination process. Once determination has been completed applicants are notified if they are eligible or not. Fair hearing rights information is provided to the applicant not only on the application form, but also on the payment voucher, as applicable. Applicants who are not eligible for a benefit will receive a denial notice containing a form to request a fair hearing. (See Attached Denial Form)

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reference

2605(b)(15)

For States and Puerto Rico only (not applicable to Tribes, or to territories whose annual regular LIHEAP allotments are \$200,000 or less): Does the State agency that administers the following LIHEAP component also administer the State's welfare program?

(alternate outreach
and intake)

Heating Assistance

☐ yes☒ no

If yes, describe alternate process for outreach and intake:

Cooling Assistance

☐ yes☒ no

N/A

If yes, describe alternate process for outreach and intake:

Crisis Assistance

☐ yes☒ no

If yes, describe alternate process for outreach and intake:

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statutory
reference

2605(b)(16)

Do you use LIHEAP funds to provide services that encourage and enable households to reduce their home energy needs and thereby the need for energy assistance? (This assurance refers to activities such as needs assessments, counseling, and assistance with energy vendors.)

 X Yes No

If yes, how do you ensure that you don't use more than 5% of your LIHEAP funds - statutory ceiling - for these activities?

No more than two percent (2%) of our LIHEAP funds will be used for purposes such as outreach services, budget counseling, needs assessments, home energy education and referrals (as outlined on Page (6)).

The above limit will be enforced by our budget review and approval process combined with onsite fiscal monitoring.

The "Other Assistance or Benefits" category will be maintained as a separate category from administration and fuel assistance vendor benefits for budgeting and reporting purposes. This category will also be defined in our subgrant agreements and contractually limited by that document.

We will also provide extensive training on this category of assistance at our summer subgrantee training sessions.

Any costs incurred in excess of the two percent (2%) limitation by Subgrantees for the above activities must be borne by other funds.

MSHA may also use up to 2% of the LIHEAP funds to pay interest, at a rate estimated to be 3%, accruing on any MSHA funds advanced by MSHA to each participating qualified oil and/or K-1 vendor choosing the Cap Price Plan pricing option or the Discounted Cash Price pricing option with a Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene) with MSHA, in order to assist participating qualified oil and/or K-1 vendors in securing lower-cost fuel supplies to fulfill their respective obligations to deliver home energy to eligible households.

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statutory
reference

2607A

Please describe leveraging activities planned for the fiscal year. Complete this entry if you plan to apply for LIHEAP leveraging incentive funds and to include in your leveraging report resources/benefits provided to low income households this fiscal year under criterion (iii) in 45 CFR 96.87(d)(2). Provide the following information for each: (This entry is optional.*)

- (1) Identify and describe each resources/benefit;**
- (2) Identify the source(s) of each resource; and**
- (3) Describe the integration/coordination of each resource/benefit with the LIHEAP program, consistent with 1 or more of conditions A-H in 45 CFR 96.87(d)(2)(iii).**

*** Leveraged resources/benefits that are counted under criterion (iii) in 45 CFR 96.87(d)(2) must be identified and described in the grantee's LIHEAP plan and distributed as indicated in the plan. In addition, leveraging resources/benefits that are counted under criterion (ii) must be carried out under one or more components of the grantee's regular LIHEAP program.**

Maine's public utility companies offer discount rates and a variety of other benefits to our LIHEAP clients. These programs are targeted to low income clients, using LIHEAP eligibility, and are provided by individual companies in their specific service areas. Examples of these are discount prices, water tank wraps* and debt forgiveness. While companies may modify their programs from year to year, LIHEAP participants are consistently targeted. These programs are coordinated through the utility companies and our ten subgrantees.

* Tank Wraps are: lowering the temperatures on the hot water heaters and wrapping them in an insulation blanket to save energy and money.

Our subgrantees also organize and coordinate local church groups and other local organizations to provide such benefits as donated materials and volunteer labor for Weatherization measures. These efforts are targeted exclusively to LIHEAP recipients.

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reference

Project Santa and the American Red Cross also provide benefits to LIHEAP clients through our subgrantees. These benefits are generally blankets, sleepers, snow suits, sweaters, sweatsuits, nightclothes, etc., all of which are designed to improve the living conditions and lessen heating costs for the recipients. Our subgrantees ensure that all LIHEAP clients are made aware of these benefits and receive them if they so desire. These benefits are provided exclusively to LIHEAP recipients.

Ingraham Volunteers also works through our subgrantees to provide additional funds specifically for home heating fuel to LIHEAP clients who have received our Fuel Assistance benefits, but that still have an unanswered need for more assistance. The funds are provided through local fund raising and donations to Ingraham Volunteers.

Maine's Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is providing \$2,600,000 to replace inefficient appliances for LIHEAP households.

Finally, all participating Maine oil and K-1 vendors provide home heating fuel to our LIHEAP clients at a capped, discounted price and/or cash price. The terms and conditions related to the capped, discounted price and/or capped price are set forth in the Grantee's Vendor Agreements (Vendor Agreement (Oil and Kerosene), Vendor Agreement (Propane, Electricity, Natural Gas and Coal) and Vendor Agreement (Wood Fuel)).

The subgrantees (ten Community Action Agencies) appropriate the resources/benefits for distribution to low income households as supplements and/or alternatives to the Grantee's LIHEAP program. The resources/benefits are integrated and coordinated with the subgrantee's LIHEAP program. The resources supplement LIHEAP assistance that was not sufficient to meet households home energy needs. The type and amount of assistance provided by the resource is directly affected by the LIHEAP assistance received by the households. These resources include Maine's Public Utility Companies, local church groups, the ten subgrantees, local organizations (Ingraham Volunteers, etc.), in-kind donations, Project Santa, American Red Cross, and Fuel Vendors (oil dealers).

Leveraging funds received as an award based on previous leveraging efforts are included in this State Plan.

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statutory
reference

2605(b)

Please describe performance goals and measures planned for the fiscal year.

(This entry is optional.)

(performance

goals and measures) Maine will continue to focus program results for the upcoming year in the following areas:

- Provide fuel assistance benefits to 45,000 households.
- Provide the highest benefits to those with a combination of the highest energy consumption and the lowest incomes. Use actual energy consumption data and income data gathered through reports to determine if the design heat load formula is ensuring that the highest benefit is going to those with the highest consumption and lowest income.
- Put a priority on those most susceptible to hypothermia (elderly, those with special needs, and families with children under the age of 24 months) by processing their applications before all others in the first month of the program year.
- Make a reasonable and good-faith effort to conduct outreach activities for, and process and serve, any eligible household, which is the recipient of benefits for wood fuel within ninety (90) days of the commencement of the program year.
- Provide the most effective use of program funds by setting aside the maximum amount allowed to provide long term weatherization benefits to high energy users.
- Serve 500 households with weatherization benefits.
- Implement a comprehensive, statewide database that enhances program planning and empowers the targeting of benefits to families with the greatest need.

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statutory
reference

Maine's Grantee and Subgrantees have reached consensus that the following needs to be added to our Performance Goals to better codify the desired outcomes. Maine will be collecting the needed information in the statewide LIHEAP database. This will allow Maine to measure the results of the targets set forth in the FY2008/2009 LIHEAP Program. A report will be submitted annually to all interested parties representing the final results.

Outcome Statement:

All of the 40,000 eligible households at or below 150% of Federal Poverty served with Fuel Assistance will reduce their energy burden by at least 3%.

- Lower heating cost
- Lower Energy Consumption
- Improve health, safety and affordability
- Improve self-sufficiency
- Make informed choices for Utility Suppliers
- Provide Energy Education and Counseling

CUSTOMERS and TARGETS:

50,000 households that apply for fuel assistance, households will achieve the following in Federal Program Year 2008/2009.

- 50,000 households will complete a LIHEAP Application in FY 2008/2009.
- 45,000 households will be determined eligible for fuel assistance in 2008/2009.
- 35,000 household benefits will be issued based on actual consumption from the previous winter season and will reduce their energy burden by at least 30%.
- A minimum of 500 households will improve health, safety and affordability in their homes.
- 100 households will achieve energy self-sufficiency.

TRACKING and VERIFICATIONS

50,000 households will complete a LIHEAP application, provides all documentation.

45,000 households will be determined income eligible and receive assistance lowering the household's energy burden.

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statutory
reference

35,000 households will receive a benefit based on actual consumption collected from fuel vendors and equal to 30% of their cost.

500 households will receive weatherization services to reduce energy consumption by 40%, improve the health and safety in their homes as well as replace dangerous or inoperable heating systems. This will be monitored and data collected to verify the energy saving and affordability.

100 households will no longer need LIHEAP as a result of receiving energy education, budget counseling, and weatherization services.

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